

POLREP 02
West Dauphin Chemical Site
2932 Dauphin Street
Philadelphia, PA 19132

321271

ATTN: RRC

I. SITUATION (as of Monday, 21 August 2000)

Event: Emergency Response/CERCLA Removal Action

A. Background: On Thursday, 17 August 2000, the Philadelphia Fire Department - Hazardous Materials Unit (PFD-HMU) notified EPA of an emergency situation located in a residential area at 2932 Dauphin Street in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Upon arrival, OSCs Jack Kelly and Mike Taurino discovered approximately three hundred 55-gallon drums and various sized containers in a warehouse behind the 2932 Dauphin Street rowhome address and in the driveway adjacent to the house. The middle room of the rowhome first floor contained approximately eighty containers of various sizes, some with product chemical labels and others appearing to contain wastes or mixings of unknown composition.

In the warehouse and outside, on at least one drum or container each, the hazardous substances hydrofluoric acid, hydrochloric acid, tetrahydrofuran, ethyl alcohol (with butyl alcohol), methanol, polyethylene glycol, ammonium hydroxide, sodium hydroxide, glacial acetic acid, and n-butyl methacrylate monomer were labeled. Numerous containers were labeled corrosives and solvents, a few had poison labels. OSC Kelly determined that conditions at the Site posed the threat of a release of hazardous substances to the environment which would present a threat to human health or welfare or the environment. Kelly activated Superfund under Delegation of Authority 14-1-A in the amount of \$200,000 to initiate stabilization and further characterization efforts. OSC Taurino (assisting Kelly) met with the site operator, at the time incarcerated by the Philadelphia Police Department (PPD), and obtained his permission to access the Site to sample and secure Site contents. Utilizing information from the PPD, OSC Kelly and a PPD officer went to the nearby former home of the deceased owner of record for the 2932 property. Kelly learned from the current resident of the house (a friend of the former owner) that the owner had died more than a year ago and could obtain no documentation that the property has a current owner.

With access obtained, OSC Kelly activated ERRS to respond and begin securing and stabilizing the site. ERRS initiated 24-hour site security at the site on Friday, 18 August 2000, and began mobilizing personnel and equipment to the scene. Due to extremely limited space at the site, OS Taurino contacted the owner of the adjacent vacant lot (2930 Dauphin Street) and obtained verbal permission to access the property. Access was granted to

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clear and level the lot as well as utilize the lot for site operations, including the staging of materials and equipment.

B. Personnel from the following agencies and organizations are assisting in various activities at the site: EPA and its contractors, PFD-HMU (initial responders with followup responsibilities), Philadelphia Police Department - Environmental Response Unit (PPD-ERU) (conducting a criminal investigation), and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) (at the site on 8/17 and offering assistance to EPA for future activities). 24-hour site security is being provided by EPA through its ERRS contract mechanism.

C. Project Costs:

<u>Agency</u>	<u>Current Costs</u>	<u>Project Ceiling</u>
ERRS	\$	\$135,000
EPA Direct	\$	\$ 15,000
EPA Indirect	\$	\$ 25,000
START	\$	<u>\$ 35,000</u>
Total	\$	\$200,000

II. ACTIONS TAKEN

A. Friday, 18 August 2000: At approximately 1800 hours, OSC Kelly called the PPD 9th Police District in order to speak with the operator confined there in a holding cell. Kelly was permitted to speak with the operator for a few minutes and asked what chemicals at the site may be particularly hazardous. The operator mentioned sulfuric acid in a five gallon glass container, sulfuric hydrofluoric acid in four to six drums and an unspecified "car coating". The operator indicated that he would come up to the Site on Monday if he were to be released from the holding cell. The conversation ended because a police officer indicated that the operator was about to meet the judge for bail consideration.

B. Saturday, 19 August 2000: ERRS installed temporary fencing along Dauphin Street adjacent to the Site and vacant lot to restrict site access. OSC Kelly conferred with the operator of the Site and his sister. The operator had just been released from incarceration and was out on bail. The operator requested access to the rowhome in order to obtain clothing and his sister asked for access to search for a driver's registration. Having been provided the keys to the house by the PPD, Kelly allowed their access but cautioned that they could not take documentation as the PPD may still be conducting an active investigation (although Kelly believed that PPD had completed this work in light of his receipt

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of the keys). The operator and his sister removed clothing, a car battery, and a few family photographs.

The operator informed Kelly that he had payed rent to the owner of 2932 Dauphin up until the owner died over a year ago. The operator asked Kelly if the EPA could provide him with temporary relocation as he had no place to live. Kelly indicated that he would need to look into this and would speak to him on Monday. The operator indicated he may stay with his father who lives in Philadelphia although his father's house had limited space. Kelly obtained information from the operator about his former activities at the Site and learned that he was making car care products (i.e. greases, waxes, polishes) and hair care products. Kelly informed the operator, per discussions with EPA management and Office of General Counsel, that EPA could not him with temporary relocation.

C. Monday, 21 August 2000: ERRS personnel returned to the site to continue site stabilization efforts. Activities included the clearing and grubbing of overgrown weeds at the site, and the mobilization of support equipment including a rolloff container for trash and debris and toilet facilities. In addition, the former operator of the facility arrived at the site, and spoke with OSC Kelly regarding past operations and chemicals involved. START, ERRS, Kelly and the operator briefly walked through the warehouse and answered questions about individual drums and containers. START also visited City Hall in order to obtain current property deeds showing current ownership for both 2930 and 2932 Dauphin Street in support of site access. The deed for 2930 was obtained and confirmed our understanding of the identity of the owners, now deceased; the 2932 deed is on order.

III. FUTURE ACTIONS

A. ERRS to continue mobilization of personnel and equipment in support of stabilization and container characterization efforts.

B. OSC Kelly to continue to coordinate site activities with local, state, and federal agencies.

Jack Kelly, OSC
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